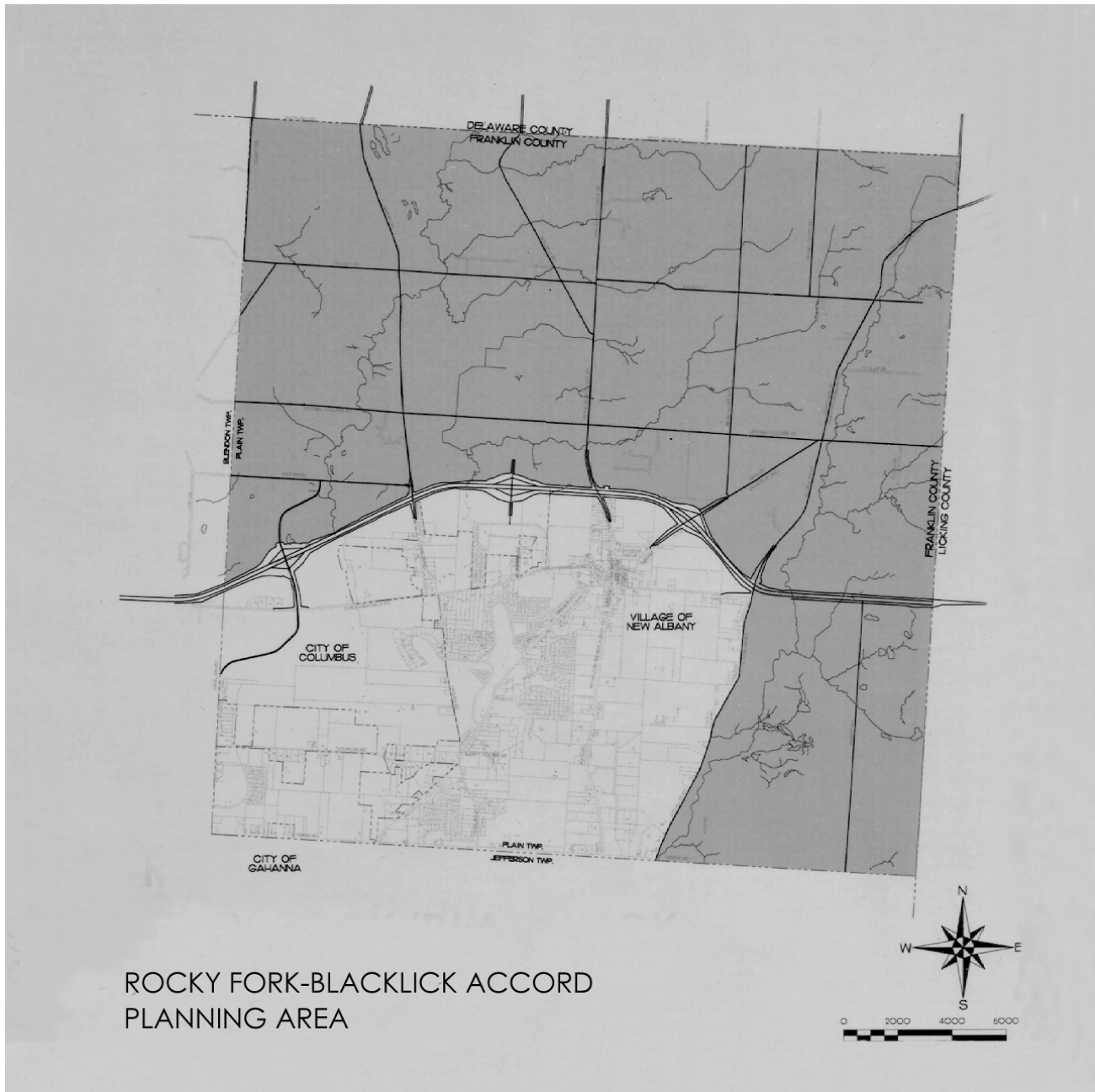


# INTRODUCTION

The Rocky Fork-Blacklick Accord is an initiative of the city of Columbus and the village of New Albany to establish long range planning guidelines to manage future growth and development within the defined planning area. The purpose of the Accord is to protect, preserve and enhance the quality of life in the participating jurisdictions.

As background for the plan, current conditions were evaluated and data analyzed to forecast development scenarios and community needs for the next fifteen years. For purposes of clarity, the year 2015 is used throughout this document to denote this frame of reference. This plan is intended to be elastic and changeable so that it may grow with the planning area.

The Rocky Fork-Blacklick Accord is named after the two most prominent creeks that extend through the study area. The word, "Accord," was chosen to represent the consensus that the planning process sought and the plan itself represents.



The Rocky Fork-Blacklick Accord planning area is bordered by Delaware County on the north, a portion of Morse Road on the south, Kitzmiller Road and Licking County on the east, and Hamilton Road on the west. The planning area excludes territory south of the New Albany Expressway and west of Kitzmiller Road.



## Background

The planning area encompasses 11,285 acres, approximately seventeen square miles. At the time of this planning process, fifteen hundred acres were zoned for industrial and commercial uses, 700 acres were in flood plain, 800 acres were golf courses and 2,060 were developed as residential uses. There were 6,225 additional undeveloped acres.

According to the Census, the 1990 population in the planning area was approximately 3,856. The total projected population in the planning area in the year 2015 ranges from 20,000 to 26,000 including the current population, depending upon the rate and type of development.



Columbus Area Map



## Historic Context

The first known inhabitants of this area were the Mound Builders. These Adena and Hopewell peoples lived in the area from 800 B.C. to about 1500 A.D. and then disappeared. Around 1700, the Delaware, Wyandot, Seneca, Ottawa, Erie, Iroquois, Mingo, and Shawnee tribes populated the dense forests in and near the planning area. Non-native settlers came to the area about 1800.



In 1834, a carpenter named Noble Landon bought forty acres of land in Plain Township where the roads to Delaware, Granville and Worthington intersected. The following year, he built a tavern and hotel on the southeast corner of the present Main and High Streets. William Yantis owned land on the west side of the street. He was a harness maker who also practiced medicine. In 1837, Landon and Yantis founded the town of New Albany and platted 72 lots. The Village was incorporated in 1856.



The early settlers were German, Scotch-Irish, Scotch, French, Dutch, Italian, African, and British. They were very involved in their government, serving as justice of the peace, county commissioner, and county auditor. In fact, in 1922, Mrs. E. Babbitt presided over one of the first town councils in the state comprised of women.

Yantis, Taylor, Babbitt, Doran, Ogden, Landon, Beecher, Goodrich, Schleppi, Miller, Swickard, Bevelhymer, Alpach, Zarley, McCurdy, Cavendish, McElwee, Ogden, Wilkin and Goodheart are some of the early family names recognizable as street or place names today. Some of the descendants of the early families continue to live in the area.

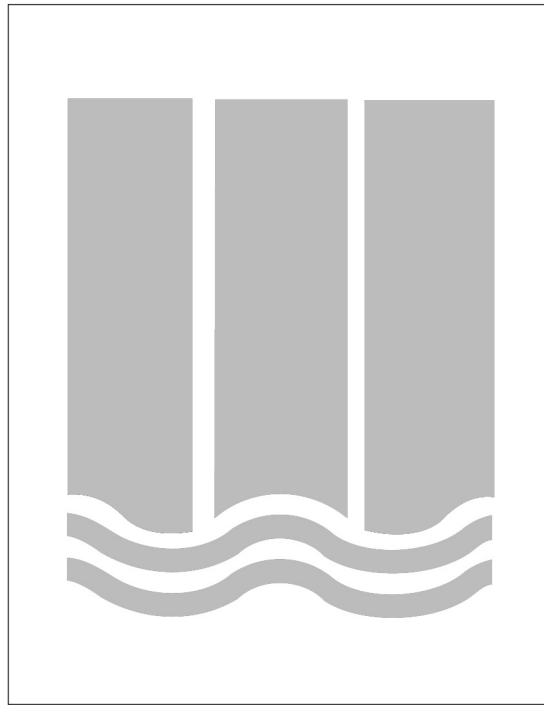


# Historic Inventory

1. 1836 United Brethern Church (Lion's Club) Central College Rd.
2. 1925, New Albany Plain Twp. School, North High St
3. Albright School, 5549 Walnut St.
4. 1900's, Butsko House, 8189 Bevelhymer Rd.
5. 1861, Pleasant Hill School, 6730 Kitzmiller Rd.
6. 1850, Doran House and Barn, 6851 Bevelhymer
7. 1872, Science Hill School, 4243 Kitzmiller Rd.
8. 1893, Doran, 5462 Babbitt Rd.
9. Smith Cemetery, Walnut St. & Lee Rd.
10. Wagnor Cemetery, Central College Rd.
11. Smith Burying Ground, Route 62
12. Old Burying Ground, Reynoldsburg-N.A. Rd.
13. Maplewood Cemetery, Reynoldsburg-N.A.Rd.
14. Early 20th Century, Brenning, 6588 N.A.-Condit Rd.
15. 1840, (Bobo rebuilt in 1864) Ranney, 9-11 South High St.
16. 1870, H.H. McCurdy, 15 South High St.
17. 1862-1870, Beecher, 97 West Main St.
18. 1852-1856, McCurdy, 6558 Dublin Granville Rd.
19. 1856, Ealy, 6359 Dublin Granville Rd.
20. 1863, Lorenzo Taylor, 5526 Dublin Granville Rd.
21. 1881, Dague, 107 East Dublin Granville Rd. (Kern-Harrington House Museum)
22. 1856-1872, Phelps House, West Main St.
23. 1851 Dennis Strait, 7519 East Dublin Granville Rd.
24. 1861, George Clouse, 8370 Clouse Rd.
25. 1848, Archibald Smith, 6320 Kitzmiller Rd.
26. 1854, Wilson, 7600 Central College Rd.
27. 1880, Triplett, 7206 Central College Rd.
28. 1896, Boehm, 6224 Central College Rd.
29. Early 20th. Century, Town Center, Townhomes. High St. from Dublin Granville Road to the School.
30. 1880's, Tippet, 11681 Johnstown Rd.
31. 1905, Anderson, 11428 Johnstown Rd.
32. Babbitt School, 5782 Babbitt Rd.
33. 1880, Buchwalter, 7950 New Albany Condit Rd.
34. 1875, Cubbage, 7563 Schleppi Rd.
35. 1867, Brooks, 7724 Schleppi Rd.
36. 1901, Schleppi, 6040 Walnut St.
37. Althouser, 5474 Walnut St.
38. 1868, Alsbaugh, 5474 Walnut St. (Rose Taylor Dryer Museum)
39. 1918, Bevelhymer, 7420 Walnut St.
40. 1885, Schott, 8000 Schott Rd.
41. 1835-36, Daniel Swickard, 4695 Harlem Rd.
42. Early 20th. Century, Ulrly, 4653 Reynoldsburg-N.A. Rd.
43. Swickard Woods



# PLANNING



# PROCESS

---

*An Invitation...*

ROCKYFORK-BLACKLICK



*please join us  
as we begin  
an important process  
for our community...*

---



## **PLANNING PROCESS**

The planning process for the Rocky Fork-Blacklick Accord began on October 17, 1994 when Columbus City Council approved the resolution calling for joint planning between the city of Columbus and the village of New Albany. This process was an outgrowth of negotiations between the city and the village immediately preceding the Plain Township-New Albany merger vote. The merger was defeated leading to an expansion of the New Albany sewer and water contract areas and commitment by Columbus and New Albany to begin a joint planning process.

The Trustees of Plain Township were invited, but decided not to participate in the Accord. Therefore, the Accord applies only to land within the planning area that annexes to the city of Columbus or the village of New Albany.

The Accord is a joint planning initiative of the village of New Albany and the city of Columbus establishing long range guidelines to manage future growth and development in the planning area. This process is unique in that it involves two municipalities who, by voluntary agreement, have planned equally for each other's future within the planning area. This process arose out of a recognition that this area will be distinctly different in the future and that a cooperative, collaborative planning process was in the best interest of both municipalities.

## **Planning Program**

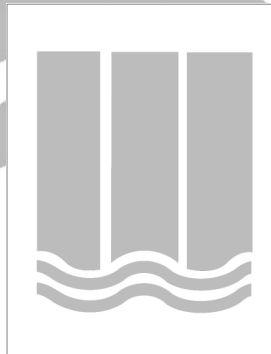
In May 1995, Columbus and New Albany municipal councils adopted the work program for the Accord. The purpose was to assure that the Village and the City work together to plan for the area in a timely manner. The scope of the phased work program included gathering information, analyzing data, setting goals and objectives, and finding ways to implement the guidelines to accurately reflect the community goals. Because growth pressures were already affecting the planning area, an eighteen-month timetable was established.

- Phase One entailed the announcement of the process, interviews, surveys, a design workshop, and public forum. Out of this first phase came the vision, goals and objectives used to guide the rest of the plan.
- Phase Two consisted of appointing a committee to oversee and guide the process, presentation of the Phase One results, data collection and analysis, and the interim report.
- Phase Three used the results of Phases One and Two of the plan to develop the Accord. Elements of the plan include land use, transportation, public facilities and services, and open space guidelines.
- Phase Four consisted of the review of the draft Accord by the appropriate advisory bodies adoption by Columbus City Council and Village of New Albany Council.

**WELCOME**

**ROCKY FORK  
BLACKLICK  
ACCORD**

**OPEN HOUSE**  
In Gym



A C O M M U N I T Y P L A N

## Public Involvement

In order to have a successful plan, it was crucial to invite participation by the whole community. The public process involved interested and affected individuals, organizations and businesses participating constructively in the decision-making process. The Accord benefited from a wide range of activities that involved the community:

- The concept for the planning area was presented at New Albany Founders Day in May 1995. A few months later, an open house was held to acquaint the larger community with the idea of a joint plan and to gather information concerning community desires and goals. The planning staff held office hours in the planning area one day each week for seven weeks to bring the planning process to the community.
- A survey of 2,263 households asked for information regarding concerns, ideas, planning preferences, visions, and goals. The results of the survey showed that a majority of respondents were concerned about the loss of rural character, protection of natural resources, quality schools, increased traffic, the need to develop a growth management strategy, and finding a way for development to pay for itself.
- After the planning team gathered and analyzed data, the first community forum was held. Baseline information about the community was presented. This forum was a participatory, interactive workshop. Those who attended defined the goals and objectives for the planning area. Those goals became the framework for the plan. The community asked for a strategic plan that would be unique in this locale. The participants felt strongly that this plan should not be a typical suburban plan; rather, it should preserve the small town rural character of the area.

# Goals

The goals identified by the community through the survey and community forum:

- Protect natural resources: creeks, wooded areas and open space.
- Achieve a balance of residential and commercial development.
- Provide high quality schools.
- Develop more parks.
- Develop a long-range growth management strategy.
- Produce clearly defined development and zoning regulations.
- Produce plans to finance services and schools.
- Development must pay for itself.
- Offer a choice of housing types, styles and prices.

As part of Phase Two of the work plan, the city and the village appointed a nine-member Panel, consisting of three representatives from the city of Columbus, three from the village of New Albany and three at-large representatives. The staff of the Panel consists of the consulting firm of Myers Schmalenberger and representatives of the Columbus Planning Division on behalf of the city of Columbus. The Panel's mission was to translate the goals and aspirations of the community into a seamless plan that can be implemented as the basis for all future development in the planning area.



New Albany High School During Construction – June 1996

Good schools are a critical part of the community vision. A school can be the heart of a neighborhood, village or town. A school can act as a community center of activity. Assuring access to quality education can mean lifelong learning and lasting value for everyone in the community.

The Panel began meeting in September 1995. The first meeting addressed goals and objectives identified by the survey and the community forum in July 1995. The panel determined that the most important goals are to retain the rural character, expand the tax base, protect the natural features, guide development, provide diverse housing prices and types, and provide good schools. The Panel divided the goals into distinct areas of focus:

- Rural character and natural features are critical elements of the quality of life in the community. The objectives are to conserve and preserve the rural atmosphere, protect and preserve the open space and reduce and control traffic impacts.
- Expanding the tax base requires attention to the structure of the municipalities' infrastructure needs and costs, fiscal health and implementation strategies. The objectives are to diversify the tax base, have development pay its own way, balance development and open space, use growth management techniques for orderly growth, time infrastructure development, define zoning and development regulations, and provide high quality schools.
- The goal for diversity centered on creating a community where a variety of choices are available to everyone. The objectives are to assure a diversity of housing types, styles and prices and a variety of commercial and office uses.

The Interim Report was presented to the community as the culmination of the first two phases of the Accord work plan. This report reviewed the vision and goals that resulted from the public input, as well as the maps depicting land use, flood plain, natural features, and demographic data.

The second Community Forum focused on presenting the Panel's recommended land use plan to the community. Other options and alternatives were discussed, and the rationale for the recommended alternative was given. Public comment was encouraged and received.





## **Analysis**

The planning area is experiencing tremendous growth pressure which is expected to continue into the future. The new, large office and retail complex at Morse Road and I-270 will have direct housing, employment and transportation impacts in this area. To a lesser extent, the surge in development in the Polaris area will also influence the planning area. Maintaining a balance of commercial and residential use is an important factor for the economic health of the area. Attracting more commercial investment and generating a diversified tax base is necessary to offset the costs that residential development brings. Therefore, a growth strategy that attracts and retains a diversified tax base is important to both the Village and the City.

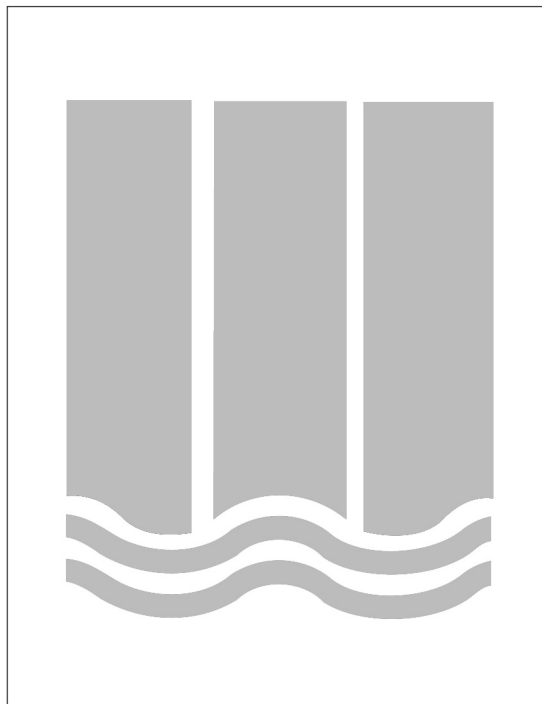
### **Economic Base**

Approximately 1,500 acres within the study area are within the office, light industrial and commercial districts. At build-out, the 1,500 acres would accommodate 9,105,104 gross square feet of office, light industrial and commercial space. This amount of space would accommodate 18,211 jobs, assuming two employees per 1,000 square feet.

The community requested that there be no regional retail centers in the planning area, only neighborhood retail. The neighborhood retail calculations are based upon planning standards that equate a population range of 7,500 to 40,000 with retail development of 30,000 to 100,000 gross square feet. The standard for the maximum size for a neighborhood center is 30,000 to 75,000 square feet, usually divided among five to 20 stores. Required parking spaces range from four to six per 1,000 gross square feet.



# THE PLAN



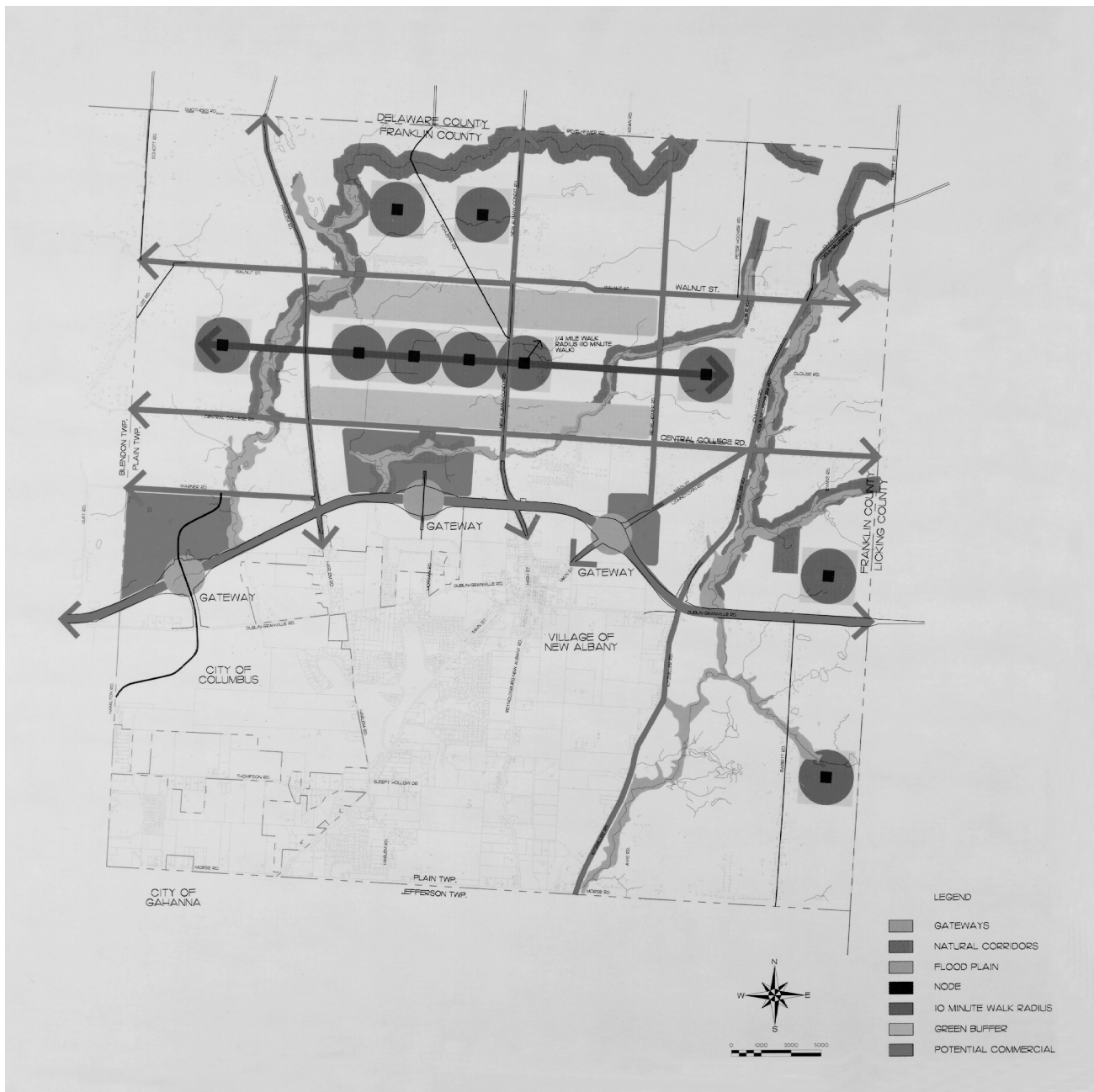


Cluster Development – Conceptual Sketch

## **THE PLAN**

In Phase Three, the Panel discussed the available data and reviewed alternative long-term growth plans. This information was distilled into conceptual land use plans. The translation of goals and objectives into land use plan alternatives was a crucial step in defining which regulatory and administrative structures must be in place before a plan could be adopted and implemented.

In January 1996, the Panel participated in a presentation and discussion of the Planning Framework and the Alternative Long Term Growth Plans. The planning framework established the basis for three conceptual land use plans. The Panel considered the alternative plans, each reflecting the goals and objectives of the community to varying degrees. The Panel developed a fourth alternative that best fit the community vision.



## Planning Framework

The underlying framework for the plan is derived from site specific considerations as well as generally applied principles of planning. In the order that they appear in the legend of the framework diagram, the following is a description of how each consideration applies.

### Gateways

Development and land values are influenced to a great extent by access and visibility. In a locale where roadways create access and permit visibility, interchanges off the New Albany Expressway create the principal "gateways" to the planning area.

### Natural Corridors

Preservation of open space and the character it created is an important goal of the plan. The rural roads and the natural stream corridors provide a continuous area of open space with multiple functions including flood plain protection, habitat protection, locations for leisure trails interconnecting parts of the site, and visually coherent and significant areas of undeveloped land.

Maintaining open space along rural roads helps preserve the rural character of the village. It is the view from the road as experienced by residents and visitors alike that defines the rural character for those who are not active users of the land. The plan also designates a natural corridor of varying width along Rocky Fork Creek, Sugar Run, and Blacklick Creek. This corridor will preserve and protect the area's most sensitive natural features. The buffers created along the rural roads and the riparian corridors will create an open space system that provides aesthetic and functional benefit to the community.

## **Flood Plains**

The location of flood plains within the study area is a critical element of this plan. The protective and environmental function of a flood plain is greatly impaired when it is developed with structures and impervious surfaces.

## **Node**

A node is a cluster of community-oriented uses and facilities typically within walking distance of a significant portion of the residences. A preferred site for community facilities such as schools, civic buildings including churches, and parks and open space, is within neighborhood nodes. By clustering these uses, a center or community node is created that can help provide a sense of community structure that is not otherwise present in a typical suburban subdivision.

## **Ten – Minute Walk Radius**

Around each node, a ten-minute walk radius represents the distance most people are willing to walk for errands, to get to school, and to get to a neighborhood recreation area. This is a distance of approximately one-half mile or 2,600 feet. Designation of this radius is a device for illustrating a preferred scale for a neighborhood around a node of community facilities. Although the automobile will remain an important means of transport within the community, concentration of housing at the highest permitted densities within these distances from the node will increase the use of alternative means of transport within the planning area.

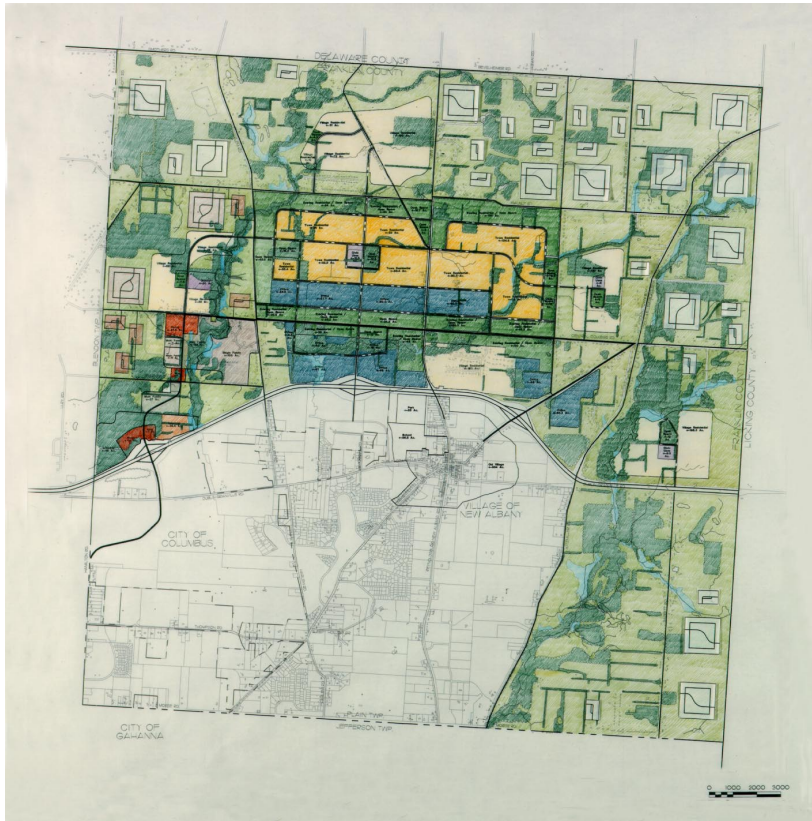
## **Potential Commercial Uses**

As noted in the description of gateways, the land along the New Albany Expressway intersections have the greatest office and commercial value. For this reason, and because residential uses would not be as desirable in these locations, the land adjacent to each interchange is indicated as desirable for office/ commercial uses.



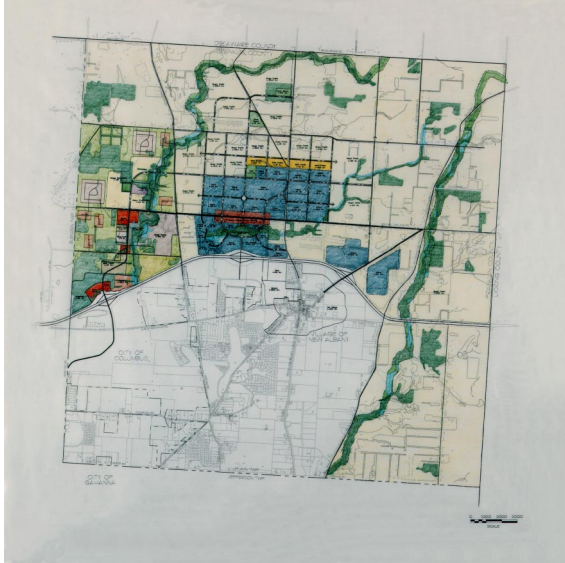
# Alternatives

The Community Examined Three Alternative Land Use Plans:



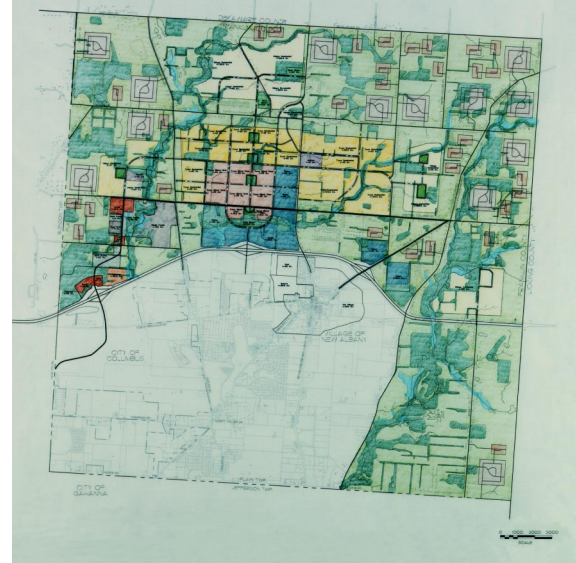
## Alternative I: Town and Open Space Plan

- Protects the open space.
- Retains rural character.
- Provides a mix of housing types.
- Is economically self-supporting.
- Creates internal roadways.
- Clusters development.
- Supports pedestrian and bicycle use.
- Supports both auto and transit use.



## Alternative II: Real Estate Plan

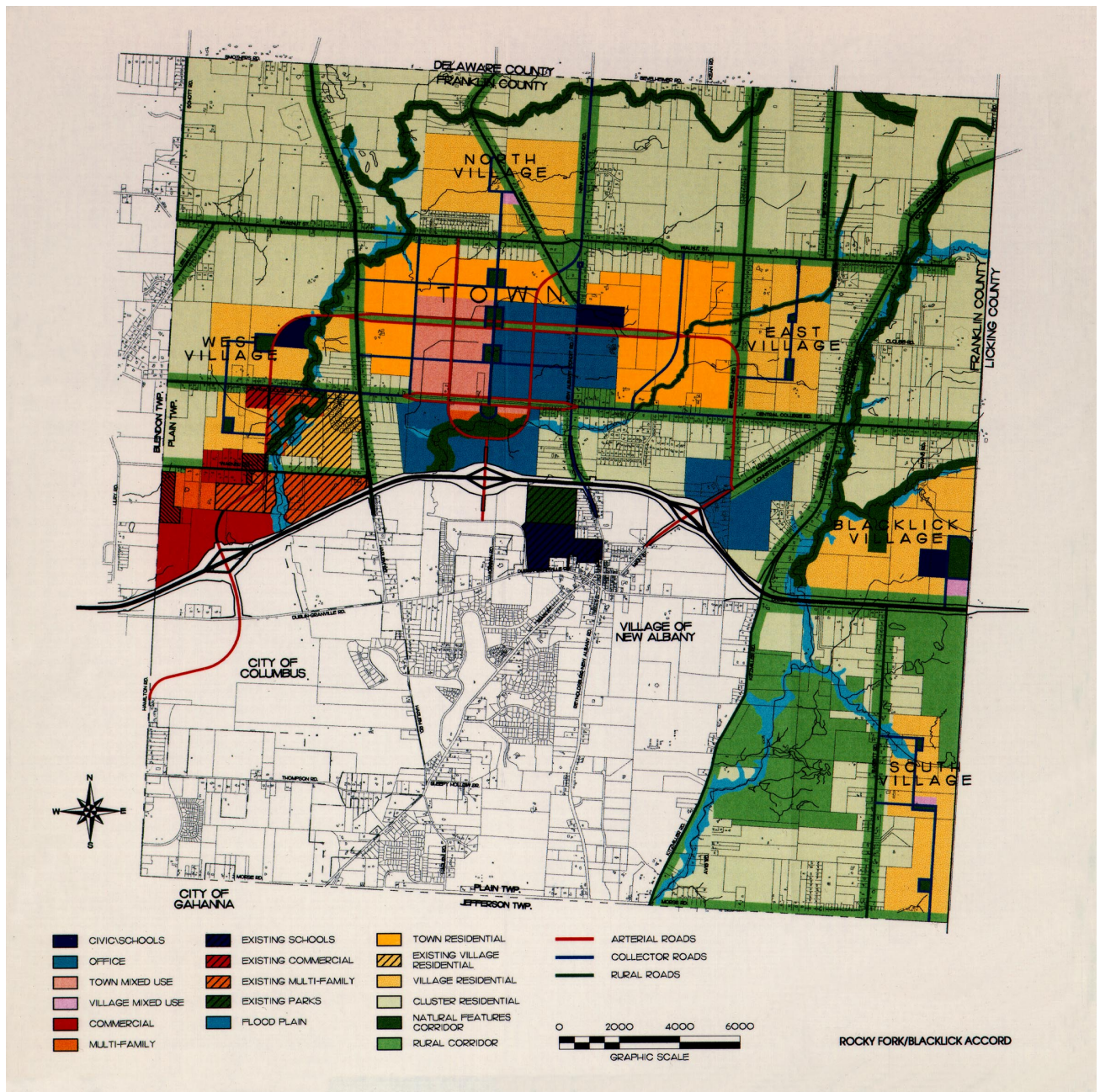
- Is a traditional suburban pattern.
- Has much less aggressive environmental and rural protection.
- Maximizes office, manufacturing, research and development.
- Favors office park "campus" plans.
- Retains and widens existing roadways.
- Creates new roads of suburban dimensions.
- Contains tall buildings.
- Does not facilitate pedestrian movement throughout.
- Relies heavily on automobile transportation.



## Alternative III: Balanced Plan

- Creates mixed-use towns and villages.
- Creates a town center.
- Creates significant, integrated open space throughout.
- Seeks to balance interests of community and development.
- Creates areas for civic amenities.
- Identifies locations for varying densities and housing types.
- Upgrades existing roadways and connects to regional system.
- Supports pedestrian and bicycle use.





Preferred Land Use Plan: 1997

## **The Preferred Plan**

The first three plan alternatives were designed to highlight different approaches to community planning. The preferred plan was created as a combination of the best of the three other alternatives. The following description of the preferred plan addresses the ways in which the plan achieves the goals of the community for future development.

### **Open Space / Retention of Rural Character**

The plan creates a coherent, connected, and usable open space system by combining three basic strategies. They are protection of natural resources, protection of rural character, and creating an open space plan by clustering development.

Protection of natural resources, including creeks, wooded areas and open spaces, is achieved by identification and protection of stream corridors as primary elements of the open space network. Rocky Fork and Blacklick Creeks are at the centers of 300-foot corridors, and the Sugar Run a 200-foot corridor.

The goal to protect the rural character of the community is addressed by the protection of a significant corridor of open space along the existing rural roads as well as by the stream corridor protection.

In addition to the stream corridors and rural roadways, the plan creates open space within the developed areas by clustering development onto lots with specified frontages and developable areas. By requiring that open space created in this way be interconnected with the other open space, the usefulness of the space for aesthetic, recreational, hiking, biking, and habitat use is further enhanced.

## **Traffic Management**

A simple organizing structure of roadways connected to the regional highway network and interconnecting within the community provides for vehicular movement. This network significantly limits the need for widening existing rural roads, thus retaining their desirable rural character.

## **Land Use Structure**

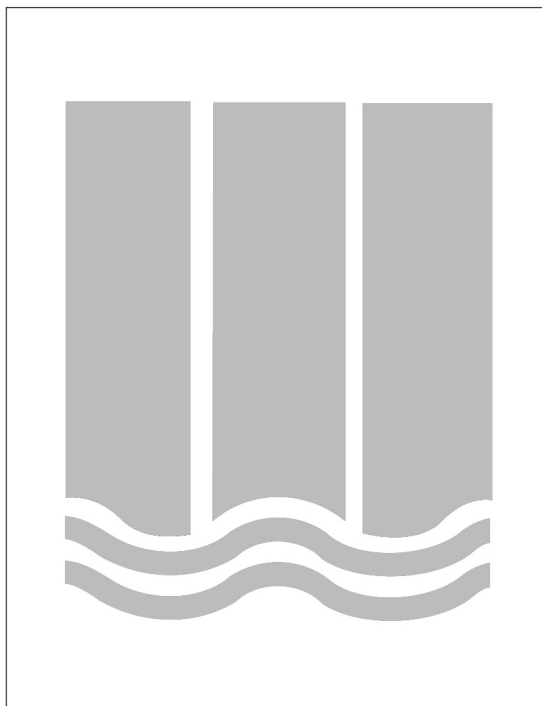
The land use plan divides the residential community into a town, five village, and rural residential areas. In addition, there are office/commercial areas adjacent to highway interchanges. This division of the land into units of development types will avoid the uniform distribution of suburban development that characterizes much of the Columbus metropolitan area. It provides for a significant amount of well located commercial land that will contribute to the community tax base. Additionally, a mixed-use area within the town will provide sites for a variety of commercial, retail, and higher density residential uses. The land use plan creates the basis for a mix of housing densities, types, and styles in response to the diverse markets that seek new housing in the area. This structuring of land uses also provides the underlying basis for development and zoning regulations that will be used in the review and approval process for development within the community.

## **Provision Of Civic Facilities**

The land use plan for the community identifies locations for a town and five villages. It is intended that within these concentrations of development there will be community centers with necessary school sites and park sites as well as other civic structures such as governmental buildings, public service (police and fire or public works) buildings, and churches. The town and villages were sized to insure that a significant number of homes are within a ten-minute walk of these centers. Schools, parks and civic facility sites will be created largely as part of the adjacent development. It is these facilities that will create the focus for town and village centers.



# RECOMMENDATIONS









## Environmental Concerns

According to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, there are two endangered species within the planning area. In addition there is one potentially threatened species and one that may be endangered but with no official state status. The endangered species are (1.) the Blacknose Shiner (*notropis heterolepis*) and (2.) the Golden-winged Warbler (*vermivora chrysoptera*). (3.) The Butternut tree (*juglans cinerea*) is potentially threatened and (4.) the Bigeye Chub (*notropis amblops*) is listed but has no official state status. Their habitat locations should be protected. By protecting the creek corridors with generous easements, the habitat of these fish, birds and trees will also be protected.

### Recommendation:

Efforts should be made to preserve the habitat of these species. Working in conjunction with local, state or national conservation groups, a community oversight group could closely monitor these areas for changes. Groups such as The Nature Conservancy can help communities acquire endangered species habitat and critical open space.



## Open Space Acquisition Strategies

A preservation and conservation easement program helps to protect historic and architecturally significant buildings and their settings, scenic areas, natural resources, and environmentally sensitive sites. The costs of such a program may be significantly lower than buying properties outright to protect these valuable resources, particularly when easements can be acquired by donation.

An easement program enables a tax-exempt, charitable organization or public agency to protect buildings or land against potential adverse changes or development. An easement assures a measure of protection for a property without burdening an organization with the greater costs and responsibilities of full ownership. The property remains in private hands and on the local tax rolls, with one owner enjoying the use of the property, subject to the restrictions delineated in the easement document.

In addition to providing substantial public benefits, easements often benefit the property owner. Most property owners are unaware they can protect their land or buildings from changes made by others once they have sold or bequeathed their property. An easement legally establishes the owner's wishes with regard to future treatment of the property and can be individually designed to match the needs of the owner and the characteristics of the property. Furthermore, an easement donation may qualify the donor for various tax savings.

The Ohio Conservation Foundation, the Nature Conservancy, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation are important sources of information.

## Parks & Open Space

Community growth creates a need for more parks and open space. The planning area is already in need of more usable open space and active recreational facilities.

### Recommendation:

Undeveloped land is for sale. The community should seize this opportunity to choose where and how parkland and open space is developed. A concerted land acquisition program involving both municipalities would be an important gift to future generations.

Because of continued development pressure in the planning area, it is important to continue planning for open space acquisition. The formation of an environmental commission to look after the environmental concerns of a community is the ideal. Its focus might include streams, woodlands, wetlands, and grassland protection and preservation; open space and greenways acquisition; wellhead protection; and erosion control. A similar strategy could apply to historic sites as well.

Subcommittees of the Planning or Development Commission can also function in this role. Continued oversight for what the community requires currently and in the future is vital to having appropriate open space. A description of strategies for each locale designated for easement, deed restriction, donation, exchange or sale should accompany the Land Use map. In this way, the community can review the map and strategies when a site comes to the commission for review.

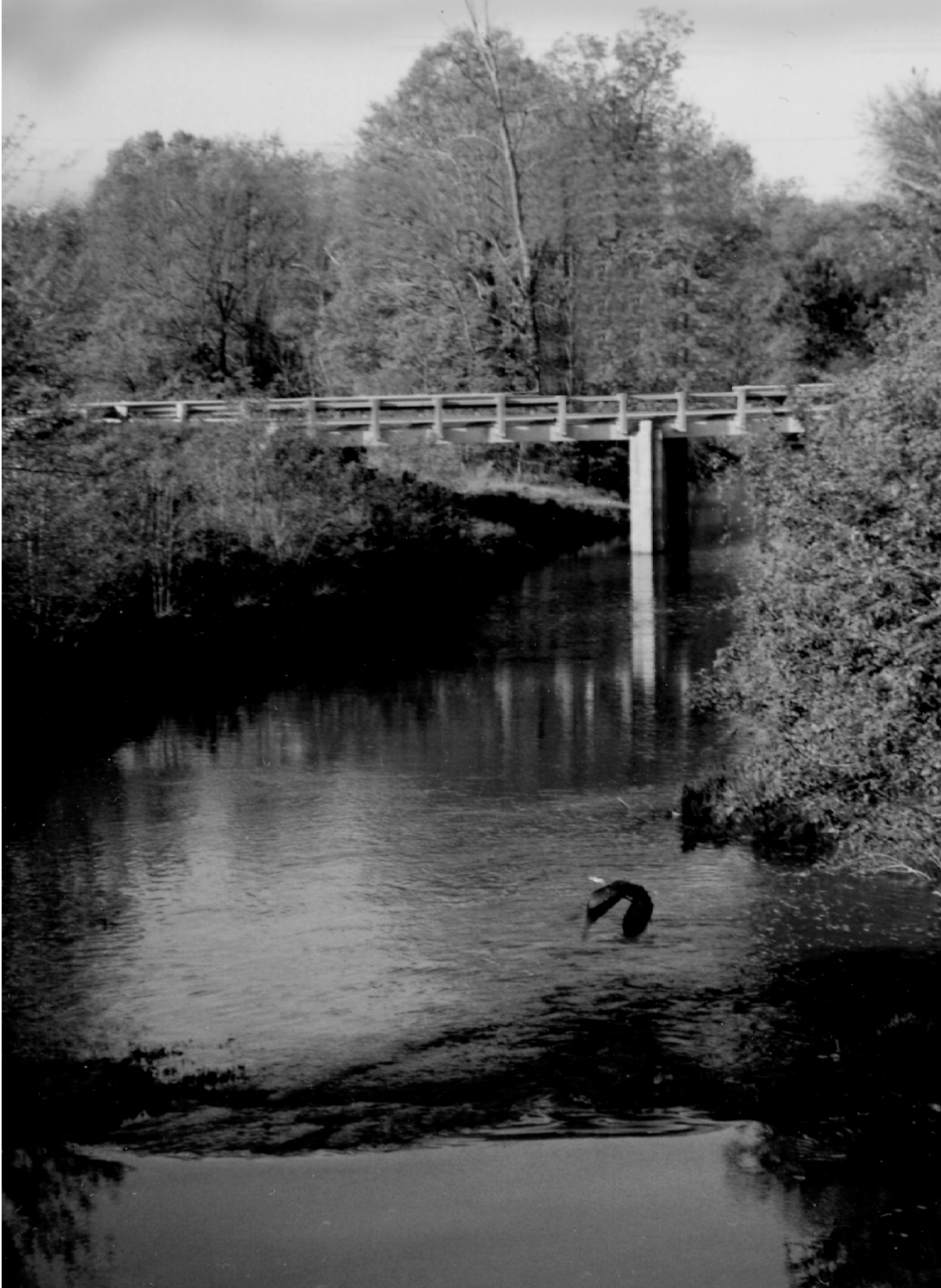
The National Recreation and Parks Association recommends that a minimum park system be composed of a core system totalling 6.25 to 10.5 acres of developed parkland per 1,000 population. That means if the population in 2015 is assumed to be about 26,000, and assuming ten acres per 1,000 persons, the community should have at least 260 acres of developed parkland.

## Categories of Projected Need

- Mini-parks are calculated at one acre or less. At .5 acres per 1,000 persons, 11.5 to 13.25 acres of mini-parks should be located within neighborhoods and built within the development.
- Playgrounds and neighborhood parks are calculated at 5 to 15 acres at two acres per 1,000 persons. This yields a range from 46 to 53 acres located in neighborhoods, built as part of the development, and contiguous with other neighboring development open space.
- Community parks are calculated at 25 or more acres at five to eight acres per 1,000 persons. This yields a projected need of between 15 to 212 acres of community parkland. This formula assumes a minimum of four parks in public open space donated by development if possible.

Many cities have approved parkland dedication ordinances to provide parks and open space. Parkland dedication can be required as part of the subdivision process. A dedication requirement can be based on a formula incorporating overall project size, number of units and subsequent density. The municipality and the developer determine what portion of the site to reserve as parkland. If no suitable site exists, the municipality may require payment in lieu of dedication. The money is then spent on acquisition and/or development of parks, greens or open space. This allows the municipality to avoid acquiring inappropriate sites and provides the opportunity to plan where parks and open space should go.

A successful parkland dedication ordinance is impact-generated and must observe a direct link between dedication or payment requirements and the benefits received. A payment required should be used for open space or parkland in the planning area. The ordinance should provide mechanisms for flexibility, including the potential for a payment in lieu of land dedication.



## Wetlands

Wetlands are protected by Federal and State law. Wetlands are assets to the community and region, serving as critical habitat for fish and wildlife, endangered animals, and rare plants; water quality maintenance; flood and storm damage protection; groundwater recharge and surface water supply.

### Recommendation:

The State of Ohio can assist the community in the protection of wetlands through land acquisition, land management, and surplus property disposal as well as financial assistance. The location of known wetlands in the planning area is shown on the Open Space and Flood Plain Map.

## Woodlands

The preservation of woodlands is critical to the over-all quality of life in this community. Although many hundreds of acres of trees have been cleared since the founding of the area, many acres of woodland remain and deserve preservation.

### Recommendation:

Allow flexible lot dimensions to encourage siting buildings in a way that protects the natural environment. Allow and encourage narrower-than-usual roads in residential areas to preserve the woods that are a part of the rural character in the area. Rural road easements are another way to preserve the tree-lined roads.





## Streams and Creeks

Protection of the natural flood plain is important to the health and safety of the community. These stream and creek corridors are an essential element of the natural drainage system. Development in these corridors reduces storage capacity resulting in increased flow rates and downstream flooding. Moreover, creek and stream corridors often reflect other environmental values such as animal habitat, which should be protected by development limitations.

The flood plain should be used as open space. Respecting natural drainage patterns and not building in these areas avoids costly problems associated with replacing septic systems, wet basements and sagging foundations. Protection of the flood plain can improve surface water quality and hasten drainage. Minimizing impervious surfaces within the planning area also hastens storm water runoff absorption and prevents localized flooding.

### Recommendation:

Allow no development within the 100-year flood plain except for open space or recreational use. Allow credit toward the open space or parkland dedication requirement for flood plain left in its natural state. Respect natural drainage patterns throughout the planning area. Encourage retention basins as a way to control runoff and prevent localized flooding only if the natural drainage pattern of the area cannot handle the projected storm water runoff. These basins can be a focal point in developments or integrated into the natural landscape.

## Storm Water

Experience shows that most of the more serious flooding situations are created. Usually, this occurs from conveying more storm water to a given area than can be carried away. This leads to ever-increasing flooding problems unless well conceived cooperative storm water drainage and floor control programs are undertaken throughout the planning area.



To reduce runoff these policies should be considered:

- Cluster development to reduce impervious surfaces, reduce runoff and pollutants.
- Maximize porous surfaces that allow for natural drainage.
- Control the amount of impervious surface that does not allow for drainage.
- Require submission of a master drainage plan prior to development.
- Storm water runoff rate should be controlled within the development prior to its release to downstream properties.
- All storm water drainage facilities within a development should be designed to have capacity and depth to serve the total tributary area.
- All proposed developments with a runoff rate greater than that for which the downstream system has capacity should be required to control the rate of storm water discharge.
- A system for the upstream tributary area must extend through the development.
- It is the responsibility of the property owner to not change or alter any drainage course, ditch or drainage system on their property that will damage or cause flooding to adjacent upstream or downstream property owners.
- All developments having existing controls located downstream from the site should be required to control the discharge flow rate of storm water to that rate which existed prior to development.



## Soils

Soils derived from glacial till materials contain substantial amounts of clay and soil drainage is often poor. The Soils Map confirms significant areas of hydric soils in the planning area. Pewamo Silty Clay Loam, Montgomery Silty Clay Loam and Sloan Silt Loam are hydric soils found in the planning area. Hydric soils are an indicator of the presence of wetlands. Three conditions are necessary for a site to be considered a wetland under Federal law. In addition to the presence of hydric soils, the site must exhibit hydrology typical of wetlands and plants that require a waterlogged environment for at least part of their life cycle. In undrained areas with hydric soils, if the sites hydrology and plant cover indicate the presence of wetlands, it may be illegal to drain, fill or modify the site without approval from the United States Army Corps of Engineers. The presence of hydric soils means that in those hydric areas, water does not move downward through the soil very fast. Instead it tends to pond on the surface until infiltration. Many hydric soil types exhibit a high water table. The ponding associated with hydric soils serves as a source of ground water recharge.

## Water Quality & Storm Water Management

Impacts of conventional types of development and large lot subdivisions include increased effluent and pollutant runoff from impervious surfaces, discharge from poorly managed sewer systems and pesticides, and nutrient runoff from landscaped areas. These accumulated effects of development have been shown to have potential for significant stream degradation and threaten endangered species found in the creeks.

Water quality in surface water bodies and underground aquifers is sensitive to the quality and quantity of runoff. A system wide storm water management system can manage the quantity of water discharged into a receiving body; however, the quality of the discharge is not necessarily controlled through detention or retention facilities.

### Recommendations:

Local pollutant source control programs can be effective in the protection of the aquifer and groundwater. Pollution prevention at the source of pollution is the most direct technique. Public awareness programs directed at increased consciousness of what can contaminate the local aquifer can offer solutions to correct the contamination problem. Programs should include goals and a timetable for cleanup and remediation of landfills, gasoline stations, road salt stations, sites storing chemical materials, manufacturing sites, abandoned wells, old oil and gas wells, animal waste, agricultural chemicals, and old or damaged residential septic systems. Runoff or leaching from these sources can carry high concentrations of dissolved solids, pathogens, nitrates and other contaminants in to creeks, streams and groundwater aquifers.

The community should have a short term and long range plan to address the local water quality issue. Involvement of businesses, homeowners, schools, libraries and local conservation groups is key. Many state and local agencies such as the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, the Nature Conservancy, The Ohio State University Extension Office, Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District and the city of Columbus Division of Water can offer assistance as well.

Cluster-style development is another tool that can be effectively used to protect the groundwater resource within the study area. Cluster developments are a practical and economically viable type of sustainable development that can minimize the negative effects of development while preserving open space.

Development activity, storm water management and agricultural runoff should be managed to maintain existing stream quality. Careful attention to the type, amount and timing of the application of chemicals and fertilizers to lawns and golf courses can make a significant difference in ground water quality. Repairing or replacing aging or dysfunctional septic systems will also enhance water quality in the planning area.

## Historic Sites

Historic sites of note are located on the historic inventory map on page 6. A guide to these sites can be found at the New Albany-Plain Township Historic Society building in the Kern-Harrington House at 107 East Granville Road.

Few of the original homes and businesses in the planning are still standing. Efforts should be made to conserve and preserve the remaining buildings. The New Albany-Plain Township Historical Society would be the obvious choice to oversee the preservation and acquisition of historic and important cultural resources.

### Recommendation:

Historic resources such as remnants of stone fences, barns, outbuildings, footbridges, cemeteries and other historic structures and sites should be preserved and integrated into the site design or preserved by the private property owner. The relocation of historic structures should be discouraged unless it is the only option for their conservation. Local state and national historic preservation groups can be helpful in assisting with acquisition and conservation of historic structures and landscapes.





## Schools

Two school districts service the study area: Plain Local Schools and Columbus Public Schools. The need for neighborhood-centered schools will grow as the community grows. Plain Local School officials have identified the following student-per-residence ratios as a measure of potential student enrollment. When multiplied by a projected 7,000 residential units (the estimated additional number of housing units within the planning area), the student population yield as follows:

Elementary (K-5)	3290 students
Middle (6-8)	1330 students
High (9-12)	1470 students

Using the planning standard of one elementary school per 1,000 families (470 students on a site of ten acres), seven elementary schools would be required in the planning area. Assuming one middle school per 4,000 families (800 students on a site of 20-25 acres) would require two middle schools. One high school per 8,000 families (1,200 students on at least 80 acres) indicates the area could require either an additional high school or expansion to the existing school.

### Recommendation:

Ideally, an elementary school should be within safe, easy walking distance of all residential neighborhoods. Neighborhoods should be focused around schools and parks. All development should dedicate land in the neighborhood center for a school and/or park site before development occurs.

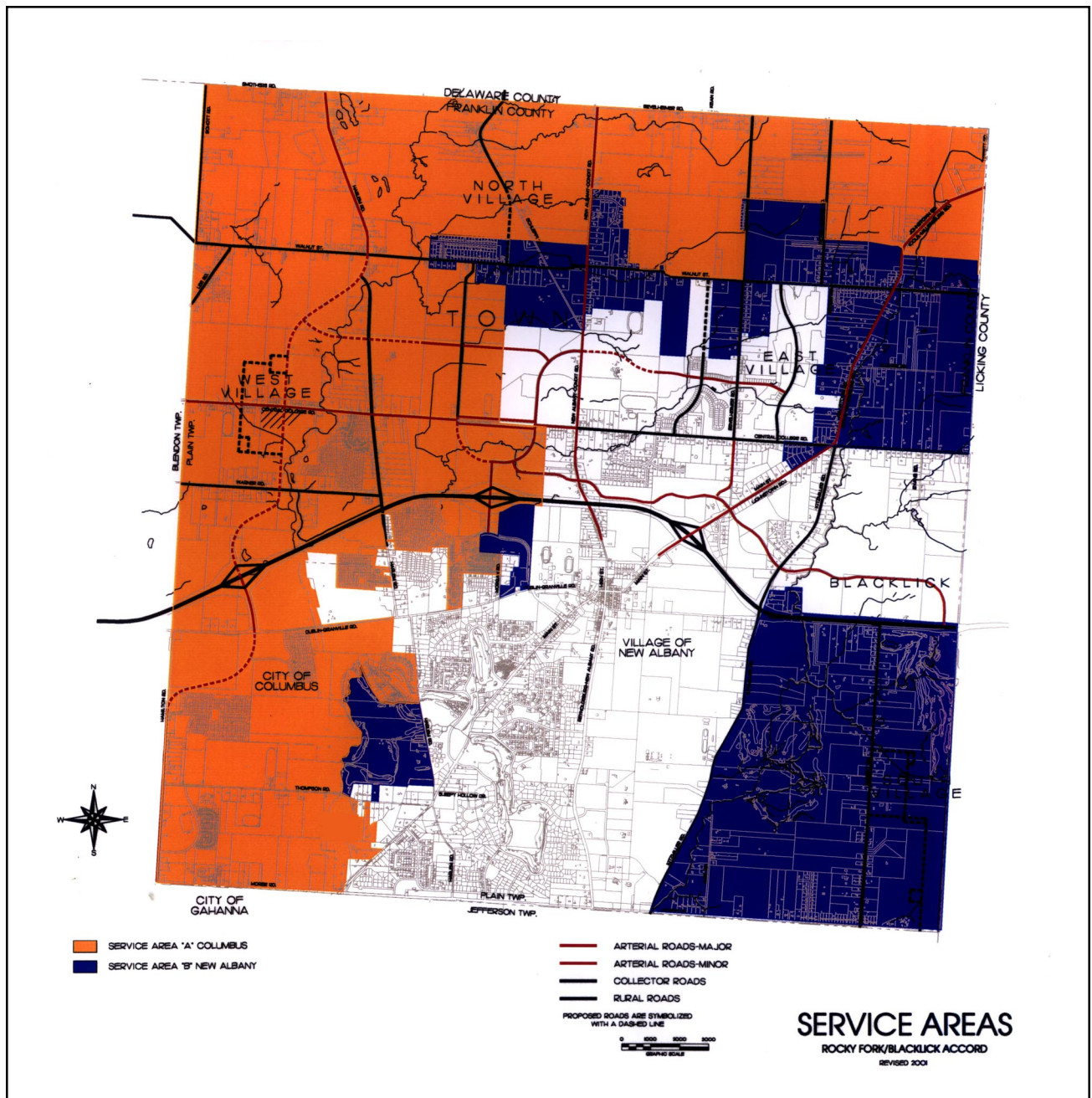


## Fire, Police, and Emergency Services

Optimum response times for police, fire and emergency services determine the probable locations of those services. Depending on the population growth toward the north of the planning area in the next twenty years, the probable location of a combined fire and police station would be in the vicinity of Walnut Street and State Route 605. This would complement the fire and police facility within the village center.

### Recommendation:

Combining safety services into a single facility can mean a substantial savings to the community. In the near future emergency medical services will be located in each fire station throughout the county.



## **Sewer & Water Distribution**

The city of Columbus and the village of New Albany have signed a sanitary sewer agreement plan under which sub-areas in the planning area would be annexed into either Columbus or New Albany. Sub-area A is the exclusive expansion area of the city of Columbus. Sub-area B is the exclusive expansion area of the village of New Albany.

## Utilities

The city of Columbus Capital Improvements Program (CIP) includes no additional sewer or water extensions for the planning area in the near future. However, the CIP budget is reviewed on a yearly basis and could be revised if development pressure is sufficient to warrant a change. Where sewer and water services are available, development follows. A new water tower will be necessary north of Walnut Street in the near future to improve service to the surrounding area.

## Transit

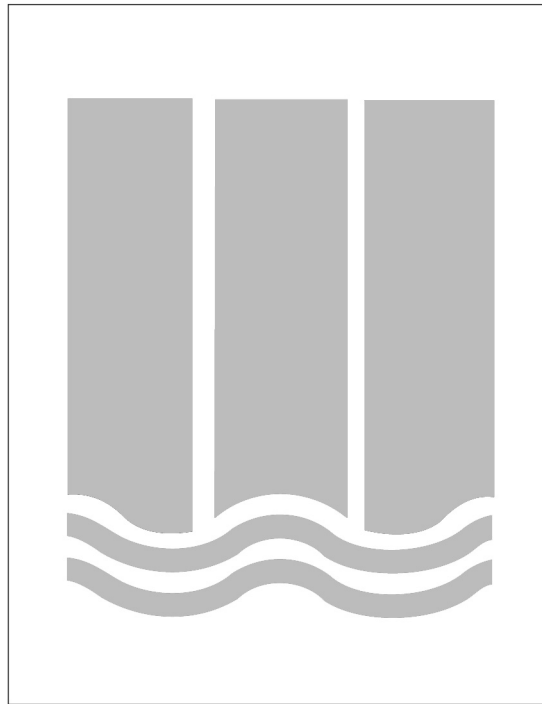
Environmental and economic costs of operating individual vehicles are increasing. As growth occurs over time, it will become necessary to expand the current transportation options to provide an integrated, safe and efficient system for the movement of people and goods. Cost-effective infrastructure alternatives should be explored.

### Recommendation:

As with any growing community, the need for several different transportation options can lessen the traffic impacts. Bus stops should be conveniently located within walking distance of neighborhoods, parks, schools and neighborhood centers. A leisure path should connect one development with another, neighborhoods with schools, parks and neighborhood centers. A community shuttle loop should be considered that could be used to connect neighborhoods, schools, parks and retail areas.



# POLICIES



## Key Principles

The Panel developed ten non-negotiable key principles that form the framework for the strategies, standards, and policies of the Accord and reflect the goals of the community.

1. Maintain aesthetic character of rural roads.
2. Use open space as an organizational element.
3. Use a compact form of development in town and village clusters with defined edges such as green belts and natural corridors.
4. Develop mixed uses in town and village centers.
5. Develop a diversity in housing prices and types.
6. Create a center focus that combines civic, cultural, and recreational uses.
7. Create an ample supply of squares, greens, parks and landscaping.
8. Guarantee permanent protection of greenbelts, streams, creeks, woodlands, grasslands, wetlands and historic sites.
9. Development in town must be located within easy walking or biking distance of other neighborhoods, schools, retail centers and transit stops.
10. Development must pay it own way.



## Strategies

The following strategies should function as policies for guiding development and community growth:

1. Development should be compatible with the rural landscape.
2. Higher density residential should be located adjacent to open space.
3. Preserve the natural features.
4. Retail development should be community based.
5. Developers should be encouraged to mix uses and housing types where appropriate.
6. Historic and cultural resources should be protected and preserved.
7. Scenic qualities along roadways should be maintained.
8. Rural character of the land along regional roads should be maintained.
9. Density bonuses and design flexibility are encouraged to allow cluster development.
10. Neighborhood commercial uses should be confined to the community centers or plazas.
11. Future development should have adequate facilities such as parkland, schools, and police protection, to support the new development.
12. Land that has direct access to the expressway should be designated for light industry, office or commercial use.

The Rocky Fork-Blacklick Accord is a land use strategy for the planning area through the year 2015. Many factors influence the rate and type of development. Population increase or decline, technological advances, resource scarcity, political climate, or shifts in the regional and national economy can effect local growth. Throughout all the phases of growth, it is crucial that development be planned and infrastructure be in place as development occurs. This infrastructure is the physical framework of a community.

Timing is a significant part of the design for the Accord. Certain elements are important to the basic structure of the plan and must be addressed first. These strategic elements are: maintenance of rural road character, preservation of natural features, and protection of streams and creeks. Other strategies such as acquisition of open space along the greenways, construction of active parks, and construction of neighborhood schools are more long range in nature because they require certain population densities or initiatives that are not directly a part of this plan.



The Rocky Fork-Blacklick Accord is structured by three basic components: roads, open space, and land use.

## Roads

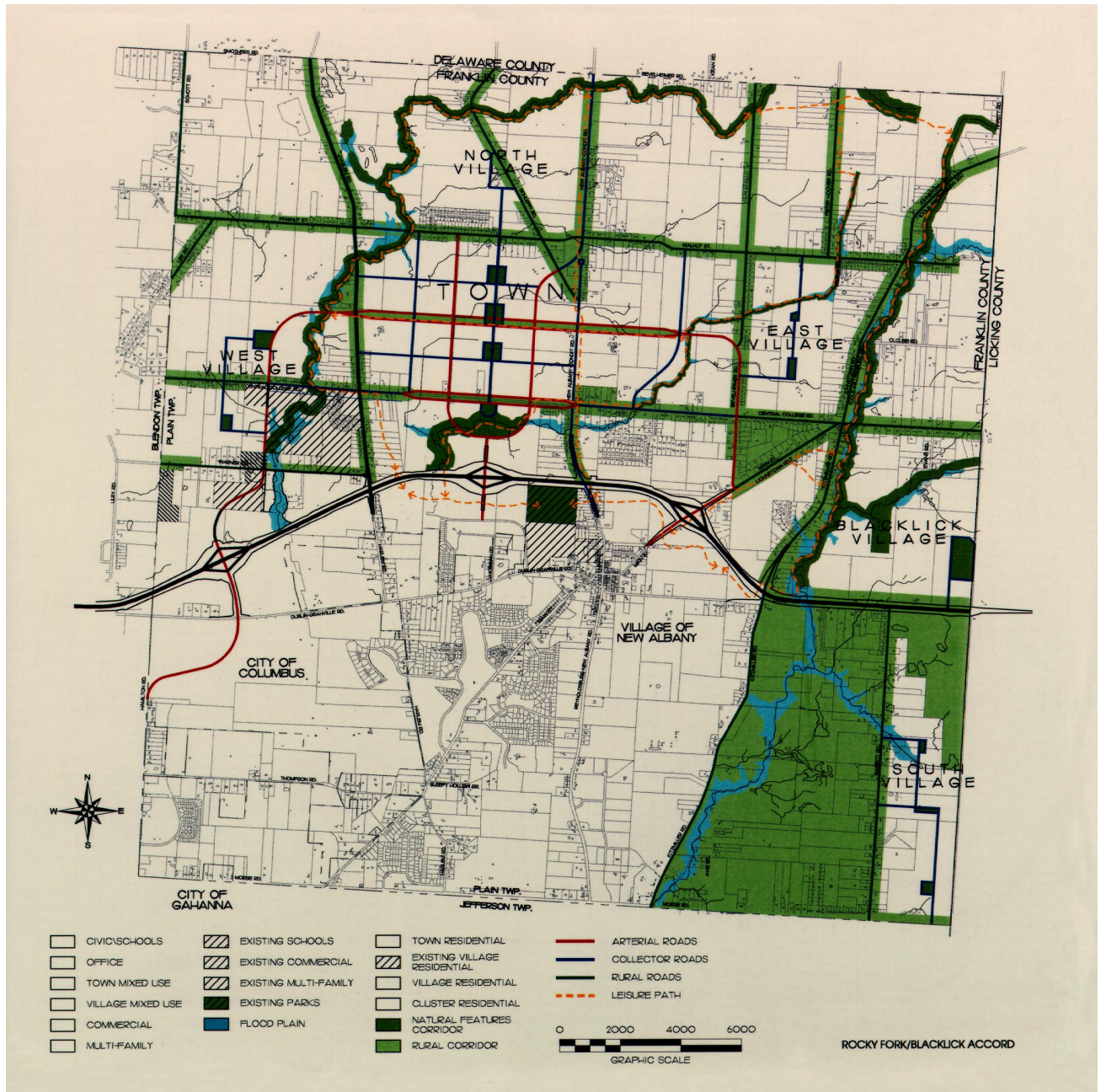
The road system will provide a rational framework of access between areas within the town and to the regional highway network (New Albany Expressway). It provides the “skeleton” upon which the land use plan was built. The roadway network will consist of a hierarchy of road types including arterial roads, rural roads, collector streets, sub-collector streets, access streets, and service lanes. This network will become part of the Thoroughfare Plan of the two jurisdictions. It will be implemented as part of private development projects to the greatest extent possible, supplemented when necessary by public street improvements.

## Leisure Trails

Leisure trails make movement around and through the area easy and pleasant, link the area north of the expressway with the area south of the expressway, encourage alternative forms of travel other than by automobile, and make accessible the natural and historic heritage of the community. These connections allow children and adults to safely bike or walk to schools, the library, the villages, other neighborhoods and the town.

The jurisdictions can make this trail system as simple or as complex as they choose. The system can also be expanded. As land becomes available through easements, deed restrictions or outright purchase by the jurisdictions, more linkages can be created. Natural and historic guides to the trails can be available at the library, schools and historical society. Service clubs and schools can institute Adopt-a-Trail programs. Additionally, schools can use access to the historic and natural areas for art, history and science classes.





## Open Space

The open space structure will create an interconnected system of publicly accessible land that provides a visual amenity, paths for walking and biking, land and corridors for wildlife. Recreational open space for active use, i.e. field sports, tennis, swimming, etc., as well as civic open space (a town green, for example) are in addition to this community-wide open space and are the subject of guidelines for the residential land uses. The two primary types of community-wide open space are stream corridors and rural road corridors.

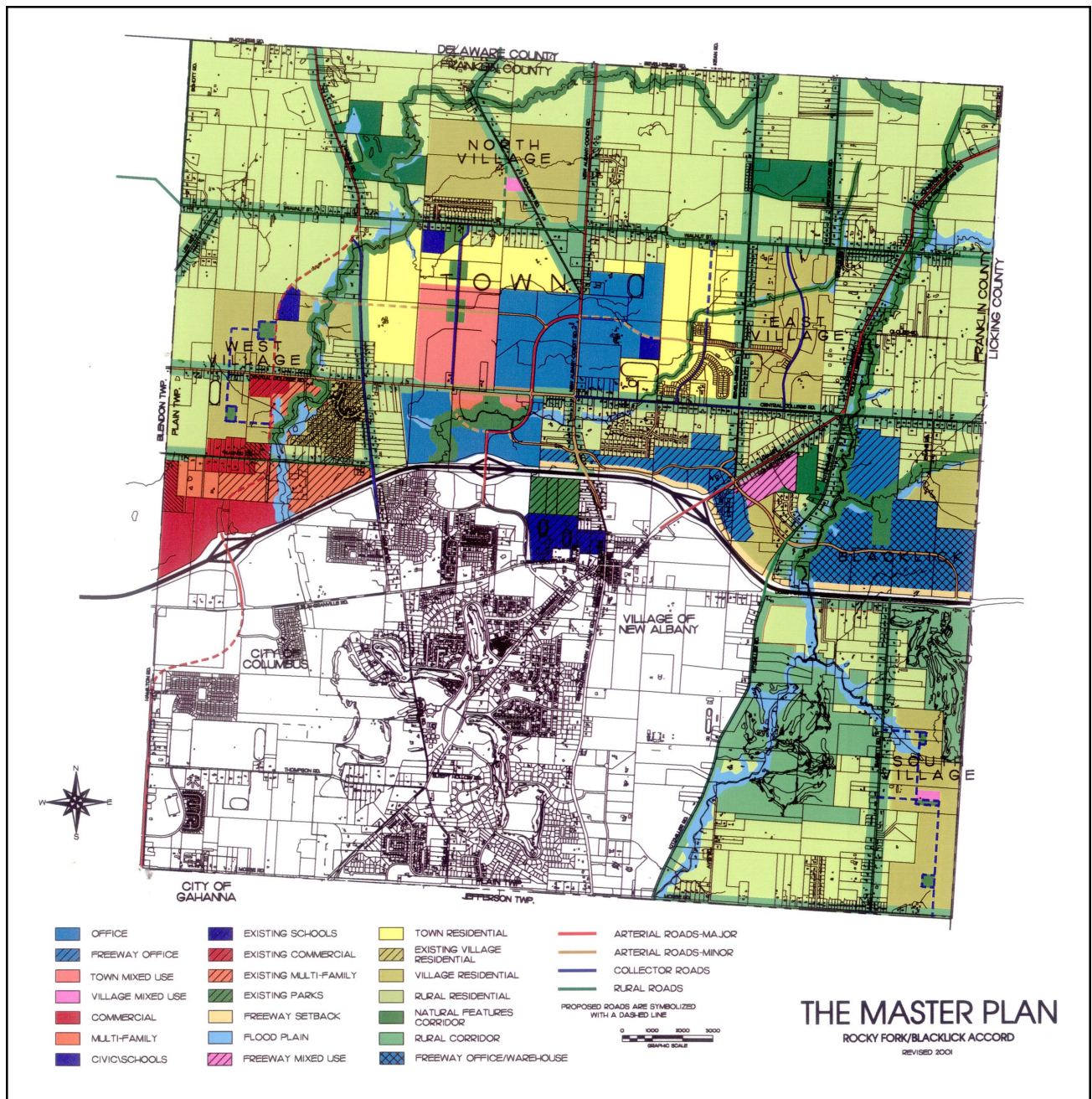
### Stream Corridors

Stream corridor open spaces are 300 foot-wide strips (150 feet to each side of the centerline of the stream) of land following the centerline of the Rocky Fork and Blacklick Creeks. In addition, there is a 200 foot-wide corridor designated along the alignment of Sugar Run. This open space would remain in, or revert to, a natural state. It would be created by a combination of development restrictions created by wetland and flood plain protection regulations, space that results from the development of abutting residential and commercial projects, and from the public acquisition of the space.

### Rural Roadways

Rural roadway open spaces are 500 foot-wide “no build” corridors along rural roads in areas where homes do not currently exist. For an area within 250 feet to either side of the centerline of designated roads, the land would be preserved in woodlots, grassland, or farmland depending upon existing conditions and abutting uses. This open space would be created by a combination of space created as part of an abutting development and, where necessary, public acquisition of the space.





## **Land Use**

The planning area is divided into four land use districts: Office, Town, Village, and Rural Residential. It is assumed that each jurisdiction will incorporate these districts and related guidelines into their regulatory framework as necessary and appropriate.

### **Office District**

This district responds to the values created by direct access to and from the New Albany Expressway. It provides locations for development with excellent visibility and locations for tax revenue producing uses.

### **Town District**

This district is made up of two primary land use areas: mixed use and town residential. Because it is central to the new growth north of New Albany Expressway, and will be served by the arterial roadway connected directly to two interchanges on SR 161, it has the widest variety of permitted uses and the highest densities. The mixed use portion of the town is created as a location for a town center with a green surrounded by combinations of retail, residential (including multi-family), and office uses. It is framed by the roadways and is incorporated into the open space system. Surrounding the mixed use area of the Town District is the residential area. This area is made up of single family homes. It is framed by and interspersed with natural and rural road open space, and should have at its center (within walking distance of as many homes as possible), a school site with abutting recreational open space.



## **Village District**

The land use plan locates four village districts. The villages are directly served by the existing roadway structure either by arterial roadway or collector streets. Each village incorporates significant open space into its land area, and is intended to be surrounded by open space. Additionally, each village should have a center that includes a village green or civic open space. Where village or surrounding area population justify, the village centers should be the location for schools and recreational open space. The village centers, with the related schools and recreation space, should be located to maximize the convenience of walking to these civic amenities.

## **Rural Residential District**

All land not designated as office, town, or village, is within the Rural Residential District. This land is framed by rural roads and interspersed with publicly accessible stream corridor open space. Permitted uses are limited to open space, agriculture, or residential. Open space is created by the clustering of units.

## Implementation and Administration

How can the community accomplish the goals and objectives it has set for itself? A strategy for implementation is critical to the Accord's success. The implementation strategies outlined represent an action plan for the community after the plan is adopted by both jurisdictions.

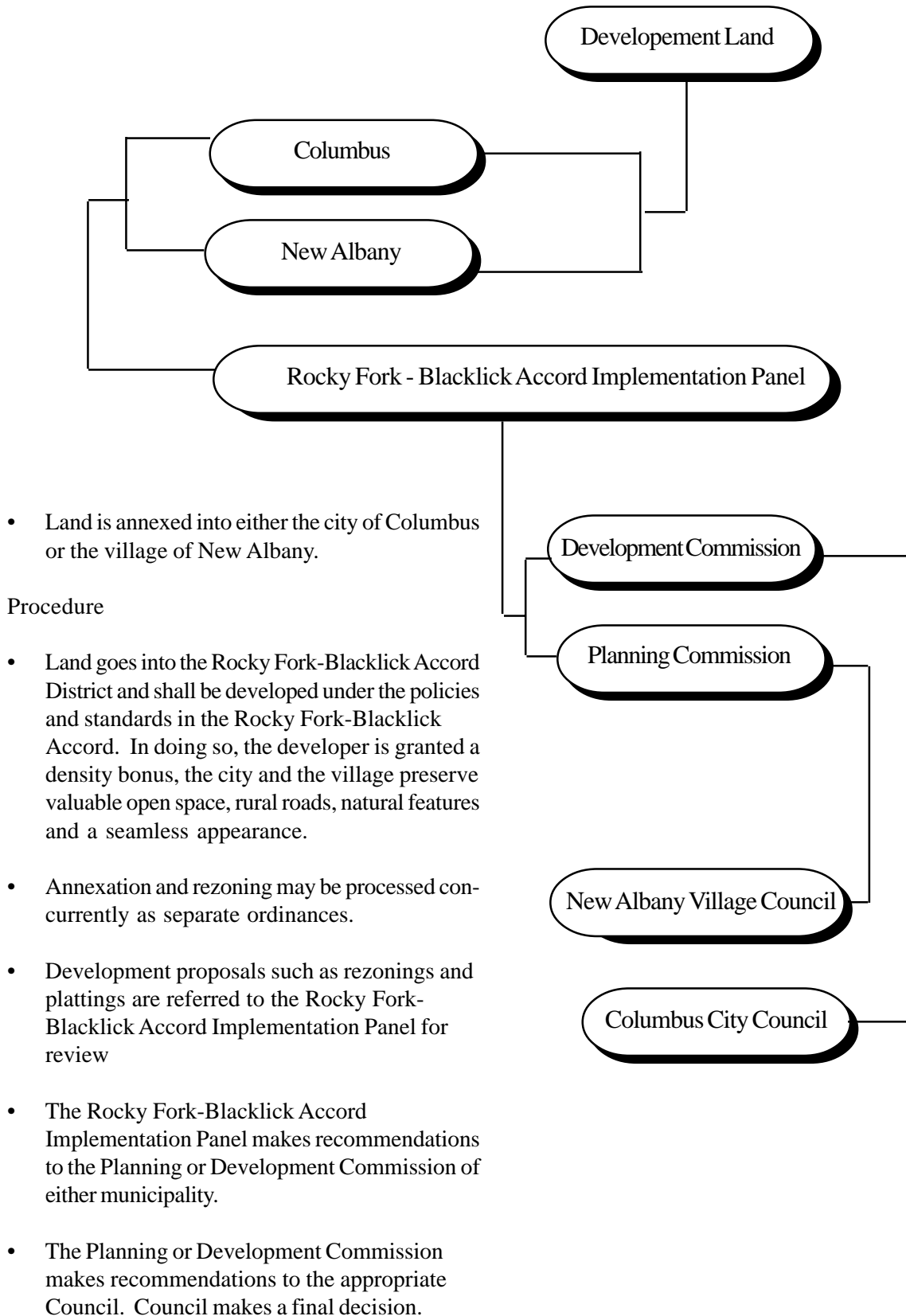
### Administration

The implementation strategies must be consistent in both jurisdictions. The ideal is a seamless development. There should be no discernible difference in aesthetics, standards, guidelines, or goals between the village and the city. To assure this seamless approach, the administrative functions should be similar in both jurisdictions.

### Oversight

It will be necessary for an implementation panel to assure that future development conforms to the principles and standards set forth by the community through the Accord. Each jurisdiction will appoint three members. Additionally, three members will be jointly appointed for a total of nine members.

When a property in the accord planning area comes in for rezoning or redevelopment:



## Site Plan Review

### Pre-Application Phase:

Accord planning staff requests applicants meet with them prior to applying for a rezoning. The pre-application meeting is to discuss in general terms what is planned and to determine which district the proposed development falls. A site plan is not necessary at this point. This is an informal meeting to provide guidance and answer questions from the applicant and to identify any possible issues prior to submission of an application. Ideally, this meeting would be held in conjunction with the pre-application meeting the applicant has with the zoning staff. At the staff's discretion, this meeting may include staff from other city or village departments.

### Application Phase:

An applicant is required to submit site, elevation and general landscaping plans along with a descriptive text to the Accord Planning Staff. After review, a staff report on Accord compliance will be prepared and sent to the Accord Panel, Zoning staff, and the applicant.

The applicant is required to return to the Accord Panel to present the proposed rezoning, answer questions of the Panel, and receive a recommendation of either approval or disapproval. A Record of Proceedings will be completed including the reasons for the recommendation. A copy of the Record of Proceedings will be sent to the applicant, zoning staff and Development Commission in the case of a Columbus proposal, and either the Village Planning Commission or Village Council in the case of a proposal in New Albany.

### Conditional Approvals

Occasionally, a conditional approval may be necessary, but generally recommendations of conditional approval will not be given.

## The Accord Implementation Panel

The Accord Implementation Panel will serve as a voluntary advisory body to mayors, administrative agencies, and the Village and City Councils. The Implementation Panel will advise on all matters related to the execution and administration of the Rocky Fork-Blacklick Accord and the Accord planning area. The Implementation Panel will have all the powers, authority and duties granted to it by ordinances and resolutions of both Councils to the extent that they are not in conflict with the Columbus and New Albany codes, or charters.

The Accord Implementation Panel will monitor the implementation and performance of the Rocky Fork-Blacklick Accord. A report on the status and implementation of the Accord will be submitted annually to each Development or Planning Commission. As a minimum, this status report will list all actions regarding amendments and revisions to the Accord, the status of the plan implementation program and the level to which current development is in compliance with the recommendations of the Accord.

The implementation panel will be comprised of nine members jointly appointed by each municipality. Each panel member will serve a term of three years. Mayoral appointments will be made within thirty days of notification of a vacant seat and will be submitted to both councils for review and concurrence. Members will serve no more than two full three-year terms in succession.

If a vacancy occurs, the mayors will appoint an eligible individual to the remainder of the unexpired term. Eligibility includes residency in either the village of New Albany or the city of Columbus. Some experience in community affairs and a commitment to fulfill the terms of the appointment is an important consideration in the selection of a panel member.

